

MONTANA CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY CENTER

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Policy Subject: THUNDERSTORMS	
Policy Number: STP 17	Standards/Statutes: ARM 37.27.121
Effective Date: 01/01/02	Page 1 of 2

PURPOSE: To coordinate activities within the facility in the event of thunderstorms.

POLICY: To provide staff and patients with a safe and coordinated plan when responding to an emergency.

Brief, intense thunderstorms are a common occurrence in this area from June through September, with peak activity occurring in late July and August. In general, such storms present little potential for injury or damage if the proper precautions are taken. In the case of severe storms, damage and injuries may result from high winds, lightning, and/or hail. Hazards may include broken windows, fallen trees or limbs, fire roof damage, flying objects (carried by wind), and damage to vehicles.

PROCEDURE:

I. The safest places in a thunderstorm are in a building, away from exterior doors and windows, or in a vehicle.

II. Do not use the telephone except in an emergency.

III. If you are outside, there are several factors to be considered:

IV. Seek low ground, but avoid areas where flash floods may occur

V. Keep members of a group spread out, several yards from one another

VI. Avoid tall objects (trees, utility poles), metal structures (fences, pipes, rails, small vehicles), and open water

VII. In an open (e.g. a field), seek low ground, but avoid areas where flash floods may occur. If you feel your hair standing on end (which indicates that lightning is about to strike), bend forward, putting your hands on your knees. A position with feet together and crouching while removing all metal objects is recommended. Have all persons in the group do so. Do not lie flat on the ground. If you can hear thunder you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning.

VIII. Check for injuries. Many lightning victims can be revived with artificial respiration or CPR, depending

upon their breathing and pulse.

IX. Check for damage. If wind or hail damage is extensive, or if there is a lightning-caused fire in the building, refer to Evacuation Plan. (Do not evacuate during an intense storm if it can be avoided; wait for the storm to pass).

X. If a fire occurs, see FIRE PLAN.

XI. Injuries that could occur during a thunderstorm:

XII. Lightning injuries may include

XIII. Severe burns, either localized or general

XIV. Respiratory arrest (stopped breathing)

XV. Cardiac arrest (stopped heartbeat)

XVI. Unconsciousness

XVII. Wind and hail injuries may include:

XVIII. Cuts from flying glass.

XIX. Concussions and fractures from falling or flying objects, including hail.

Prepared By: _____

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